Common Burdock

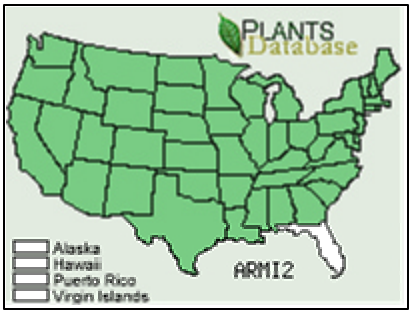
Arctium minus

Description:
Common burdock is a member of the Aster or Sunflower family, Thistle tribe. This **biennial**, introduced from Europe, reproduces by seeds. In the first year of growth the plant forms a rosette. The second year the plant is erect. The stout, grooved, rough stem has multiple branches, and grows to 2-6 feet tall. The leaves are alternate, dark green, smooth above, whitish green, and woolly-hairy beneath. The flowers are pink, lavender, purple or white in numerous heads, 3/4 inch across. The head is enclosed in a prickly bur composed of numerous smooth or woolly bracts tipped with hooked spines, flowering July to October.

Habitat: Burdock grows along roadsides, ditch banks, old fields, and waste and neglected areas.

Ecological Treat: Indirectly affects the development of economically important plants by hosting powdery mildew and root rot. Reduces the value of sheep's wool due to the seed heads entangling in it and significantly damage the quality of the wool. It is responsible for tainting milk products if grazed in large quantities.

Distribution: Note green map areas



Control and Management:

- **Biological:** None currently available.
- **Chemical:** There are many effective herbicides labeled for burdock control. Chemicals should be utilized prior to bud formation.
- **Cultural:** Minimize soil disturbances, encourage desirable plant growth.
- **Mechanical:** Top growth removal through mowing or cutting is effective. Pulling or digging out the plant at flowering or early seed formation is effective.

References: www.ct-botanical-society.org , www.cwma.org/burdock.html, www.aspenpitkin.com/misc/weeds/common_burdock.htm, http://plants.usda.gov